

Tucker Carlson just supercharged the Libs of TikTok anti-LGBTQ bigotry

Chaya Raichik calls the LGTBQ community a "cult" in an unsettling new interview.



In her first major in-person media interview as the creator of "Libs of Tik Tok," Chaya Raichik called the LGBTQ community a "cult." MSNBC / Twitter; Getty Images file

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Mainstreaming bigotry is Fox News host [Tucker Carlson's bread and butter](#). But a recent decision to share his platform with one of the most outspoken anti-LGBTQ critics on the internet was still a shock.

Carlson [released an interview](#) on Tuesday with [Chaya Raichik, the creator of Libs of TikTok](#), a right-wing Twitter account that aggregates social media videos primarily from LGBTQ users who work in the education system, with the intention of framing LGBTQ acceptance as a symptom of America's moral decline. It was an unsettling conversation, to say the least. Raichik's rhetoric during her interview with Carlson — the first major in-person media interview she's done as the creator of Libs of TikTok — was so extreme one can't help but feel that the hard-won progress on LGBTQ acceptance is rapidly unraveling.

Raichik's language deserves condemnation for a number of reasons.

"The LGTBQ community has become this cult, and it's so captivating, and it pulls people in so strongly, unlike anything we've ever seen," she told a rapt Carlson, explaining what she thinks motivates gender-affirming surgery for minors. "They brainwash people to join, and they convince them of all these things, and it's really, really hard to get out of it ... it's extremely poisonous."

Carlson didn't respond by asking Raichik if she was, even by the standards of today's traditionalist right, using too broad of a brush by calling the entire LGBTQ community a cult. Instead he asked her whether she believed there was a "spiritual component" to the issue.

After some initial hesitation, Raichik ventured a theory: "I think they're evil. Sometimes we try to break it down a lot and you know we discuss why this is happening ... I think sometimes the simplest answer is they're just evil, they're bad people, they're just evil people, and they want to groom kids."

Carlson responded affirmatively, with a quiet "yeah."

Raichik's language deserves condemnation for a number of reasons. She is demonizing and fabricating dangerous theories about marginalized communities badly in need of protection. She's conflating alternative sexual orientation and gender identity with sexual abuse. And strikingly, she's using trans identity writ large as a springboard to launch attacks on the entire LGBTQ community.

Carlson made it plain he was there to assist her in her efforts. He framed her aggregation of videos showing elementary school teachers talking about their personal pronouns as hard-hitting investigative work. His interview as a whole was designed to paint Raichik as a hero who was doing an invaluable job as a dogged, truth-seeking journalist. The goal was clear: to help supercharge her ultra-reactionary attitude toward gay and trans rights.

And Raichik's platform was already highly influential, even without a boost from one of the most widely watched cable news journalists in the country. The stories she disseminates have become agenda-setters within right-wing media ecosystems, and have even [directly influenced anti-LGBTQ legislation](#). Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis' press secretary [has said](#) that Raichik's platform was integral to "opening her eyes" and shaping her views on Florida's homophobic education policy known as the ["Don't Say Gay" law](#). (During the interview with Carlson, Raichik said that DeSantis offered her a place to stay at his guest house after her identity was first revealed by a Washington Post investigation.)

Carlson's eagerness to give Raichik a platform to spread hatred for an hour on his show on Fox Nation, which is already producing viral video clips on social media, will only help mainstream her further.